



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **LOCAL CHILD CARE PROVIDER EARNS PERFECT SCORE ON ASSESSMENT** *ANNUAL REVIEW OF SPRING CITY AGENCY REVEALS EXCEPTIONAL QUALITY*

NASHVILLE, Tenn.— The Strawberry Patch Group Child Care Home at 158 East Rhea Avenue in Spring City has done what no other child care agency in the state has ever been able to do—score a perfect “7” on its annual assessment. Along with the perfect score, Strawberry Patch has also earned a “3-Star” rating in the Tennessee Star-Quality Child Care Program. Strawberry Patch has consistently earned 3-stars since opening its doors in 2001.

“This is an incredible accomplishment,” said Barbara Wall, Director of Child Care Services for the Tennessee Department of Human Services. “It takes a tremendous amount of energy and dedication to consistently earn a 3-star rating, but to earn a perfect score on the Environment Rating Scale (ERS) is a feat worth celebrating. The children and families of Rhea County are truly benefitting from the quality program at Strawberry Patch.”

Star Quality is a voluntary evaluation program that recognizes and encourages quality child care. The Star Quality Program was enacted in 2001 as part of Tennessee’s child care reforms, and it is designed to provide more information about child care to parents and to improve the quality of child care in Tennessee. It is separate from the required annual evaluations for all the state’s licensed and regulated child care homes and centers.

The Environment Rating Scale (ERS) is based on research showing that all children have three basic needs: protection of health and safety; building relationships with children, parents, extended family, and community; opportunities for stimulation and learning from experience. These needs do not change through childhood—regardless of a child’s race, ethnicity, culture, or socio-economic background. The Scales are tools to help assess how well a child care provider meets these three basic needs.

The Strawberry Patch Group Child Care Home is owned by Betty Fugate. She also owns and operates the Learning Patch, Pumpkin Patch and Gooseberry Patch Group Child Care Homes. All of these agencies have earned the state’s highest ranking of 3-stars.

DHS has a statewide network of Child Care Resource and Referral Centers (CCR& R) to assist providers and parents. The CCR & R’s offer training and technical assistance to daycare directors and staff, and provide guidance to parents on choosing the right child care for their families. More information on the CCR&R’s can be found at: <http://state.tn.us/humanserv/adfam/ccrc.html>.

For more information on the Star-Quality Program, visit: <http://state.tn.us/humanserv/adfam/ccrcsq.html>.

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